

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 04845 231241 Z

53

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 IO-12 DPW-01

OMB-01 TRSE-00 RSR-01 /107 W
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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9098

INFO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL CANTHO

CINCPAC

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

USDEL FRANCE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4845

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. FOLLOWING REPORT WAS RECEIVED FROM CONGEN CANTHO.

2. A CONGEN OFFICER VISITED TRI TON MARCH 22 AND OBTAINED FROM TRI TON SOURCES THE FOLLOWING INTERPRETATION OF RECENT VC/ NVA ACTIVITY IN THE AREA. IMMEDIATE VC/ NVA OBJECTIVES ARE TO SECURE AN OVERLAND ROUTE FROM CAMBODIA TO TRI TON AND FROM THERE INTO THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN DELTA. EXCEPT FOR ONE GVN OUTPOST ON THE VERY TOP OF NUI COTO, THERE ARE NO LONGER ANY GVN FORCES COVERING THE CONNECTING ROAD FROM TRI TON TO ROUTE 2 IN CAMBODIA. ONCE THE REMAINING OUTPOST IS ELIMINATED THE VC/ NVA WILL HAVE A CLEAR ROAD TO TRUCK SUPPLIES FROM HANOI TO TRI TON VIA LAOS AND CAMBODIA.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 04845 231241 Z

3. ENEMY SHELLING OF TRI TON IS DESIGNED TO DRIVE OUT THE ICCS AND POSSIBLY THE JMC. THE MORTARING OF TRI TON CANNOT BE INTERPRETED AS REACTION TO GVN ARTILLERY SINCE THE GVN MOVED ITS ARTILLERY OUT OF TRI TON ON MARCH 10 AND PUT IT 4 AND A HALF KM. FROM THE TOWN. THE ONLY MORTAR LOCATED IN TRI TON, AN 81 MM TUBE, WAS FIRED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TWO MONTHS ON MARCH 21 AND THAT FIRING WAS IN RESPONSE TO VC/ NVA SHELLING. THE POLISH DELEGATION CHIEF TRIED TO PIN THE SHELLINGS ON GVN ARTILLERY, BY CLAIMING AIMING ERRORS ARE CAUSING THE SHELLS TO IMPACT ON THE TOWN.

4. IN TRI TON THE US JMC IS RESOLUTE IN ITS DETERMINATION NOT BE DRIVEN OUT OF TRI TON. THE GVN JMC HAS SUFFERED TWO OFFICERS SEVERLY WOUNDED, ONE LOSING BOTH LEGS AND THE OTHER PARALYZED FROM THE WAIST DOWN, BUT REPLACEMENTS HAVE BEEN NAMED AND AT LEAST ONE IS ALREADY ON BOARD.

5. THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN ICCS TEMAS LEFT TRI TON MARCH 23 WITHOUT CONSULTING WITH THE CANADIANS AND INDONESIANS. THE POLES REQUESTED A HELICOPTER MARCH 22 TO MAKE A " ROUTINE ADMINISTRATIVE VISIT TO TRI TON AND DELIVER EQUIPMENT ON MARCH 23." THE CANADIANS THOUGHT THEY WERE GOING TO INSTALL THEIR OWN COMMO EQUIPMENT AND LAID ON THE FLIGHT. WHEN THE HELICOPTER ARRIVED IN TRI TON AT 1015 THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS JUMPED ON THE AIRCRAFT AND RETURNED TO CAN THO.

6. THE REGION VII CANADIAN ICCS CHIEF BELIEVES THAT THE VC/ NVA WILL NOW RESUME SHELLING THE TOWN AND THAT HE EVENTUALLY WILL HAVE TO REMOVE HIS PERSONNEL FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY. THE INDONESIANS WILL PROBABLY FOLLOW SUIT. THE CANADIAN CHIEF SAID MARCH 22 THAT THE DECISION TO REMAIN IN TRI TON IN FACE OF THE NVA/ VC SHELLING WAS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT STEP TAKEN BY THE ICCS IN THE DELTA SO FAR. THE CONGEN BELIVES THAT IF THE ICCS WITHDRAWS COMPLETELY FROM TRI TON IT WILL BE AN IMPORTANT PSYCHOLOGICAL BLOW TO THE ICCS. CANADA' S REGION VII TEAM HAS URGED ITS SAIGON HEADQUARTERS TO MAKE THIS THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE REPRESENTATION TO GEN. TRAN VAN TRA TO STOP VC/ NVA SHELLING OF TRI TON. THE INDONESIAN REGION VII CHIEF REPORTED THAT WHILE HIS SAIGON HEADQUARTERS HAD BEEN CONCERNED BY THE TRI TON EVENTS, HE HAD CONVINCED HIS SUPERIORS THE INDONESIAN TEAM SHOULD STAY.

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 04845 231241 Z

7. THE REGION VII ICCS POLISH DELEGATION CHIEF INFORMED REGION VII JMC IN WRITING MARCH 23 THAT HIS PERSONNEL WOULD RETURN TO TRI TON " WHEN SECURITY CAN BE GURANTEED BY ALL FOUR PARTIES AND FREDDOM OF MOVEMENT ASSURED." THE POLISH CHIEF PRIVATELY CONFIDED TO THE CANADIAN CHAIRMAN THAT HE DISAPPROVED OF THIS ORDERS TO WITHDRAW HIS MEN BUT THAT THERE WAS NOTHING HE COULD DO.

8. A CANADIAN NEWSMAN (CP) WAS AT TRI TON AND OBSERVED EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED. HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO REPORT THE FULL STORY.
BUNKER

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